



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS CONTRIBUTES TO VENEZUELA STORM RELIEF

Trenton- The New Jersey Department of Corrections will donate the amount of \$3,000.00 to the American Red Cross to aid continuing relief efforts in the aftermath of devastating rain and mudslides in Venezuela. The contributions were collected both from inmates and staff of all NJDOC facilities and will be donated at a ceremony on Monday, June 26, 2000 at La Casa de Don Pedro in Newark, an Hispanic youth community based organization.

The American Red Cross joined a multi-national response to last winter's mudslides and flooding that killed more than thirty thousand and forced tens of thousands of people from their homes. It is the country's worst disaster in the past 50 years. The Department of Corrections began collecting contributions in February 2000 and will donate the money to help mobilize relief to Venezuelan victims.

"We cannot ignore a tragedy of this scope," said Commissioner Jack Terhune. "As the second largest State agency in New Jersey, the Department of Corrections can employ considerable resources when called upon. Subsequent to the storms in Venezuela our own staff at Albert C. Wagner Youth Correctional Facility in Bordentown initiated a fund drive which staff and inmates statewide responded to enthusiastically. We're gladly contributing to the relief efforts with the hope that displaced victims will find comfort while beginning to rebuild their lives."

Staff donations totaled \$1,938.50 over the period of approximately one month, and were added to inmate donations of \$1,061.50.

"Everyone expects the Red Cross will always be there when disaster strikes," said Walter Graham, Chief Executive Officer of the American Red Cross of Metropolitan New Jersey, "and of course we will, just as we always have. But every contribution counts, and we truly value the gift given by the Department of Corrections. We thank them on behalf of the thousands of families in need in Venezuela."

This type of contribution does not come without precedent. Department staff gave \$3,350.00 to the American Red Cross in 1998 following the widespread devastation of Hurricane Georges, the largest and most expensive relief operation in the history of the Red Cross.

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The mission of the New Jersey Department of Corrections is to ensure that all persons committed to the state correctional institutions are confined with the level of custody necessary to protect the public and are provided with the care, discipline, training and treatment needed to prepare them for reintegration into the community.

NJDOC...Protecting the Public. Changing Lives.